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THE SAGA OF JOHNNY BLAZE: Once, not so long ago, he was the pawn of Satan. He has since been freed. But, for reasons he cannot yet comprehend, he still possesses Satan-spawned strength and the searing touch of hellfire. Whether these supernatural powers are a blessing or a curse, he does not know. Yet.

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE GHOST RIDER!®

ONLY MOMENTS AGO, WHILE PURSUING FOUR MEMBERS OF AN INSIDIOUS DEATH-CULT --FOUR MASKED MEN WHO HAD COLDLY MURDERED JOHNNY BLAZE'S NEW-FOUND FRIEND AND EMPLOYER, HARLEY BAGGS--
--THE SATANIC AVENGER KNOWN AS THE GHOST RIDER FOUND HIMSELF CAUGHT IN A VICIOUS AMBUSH THAT SENT HIM PLUMMETING OFF THE EDGE OF A NARROW CLIFFSIDE ROAD IN A MUSHROOMING PILLAR OF INCANDESCENT FLAME!
NOW, AS HE HURTLES DOWN-WARD...DOWNWARD...TOWARD A SEEMINGLY CERTAIN DOOM, EVEN THE BRIMSTONE BIKER MUST WONDER IF HE CAN POSSIBLY SURVIVE THIS METEORIC DEATH-PLUNGE...
INTO THE ABYSS!
MICHAEL FLEISHER SCRIPT
DON PERLIN ART
CLEM ROBINS LETTERS
GEORGE ROUSSOS COLORS
ROGER STERN EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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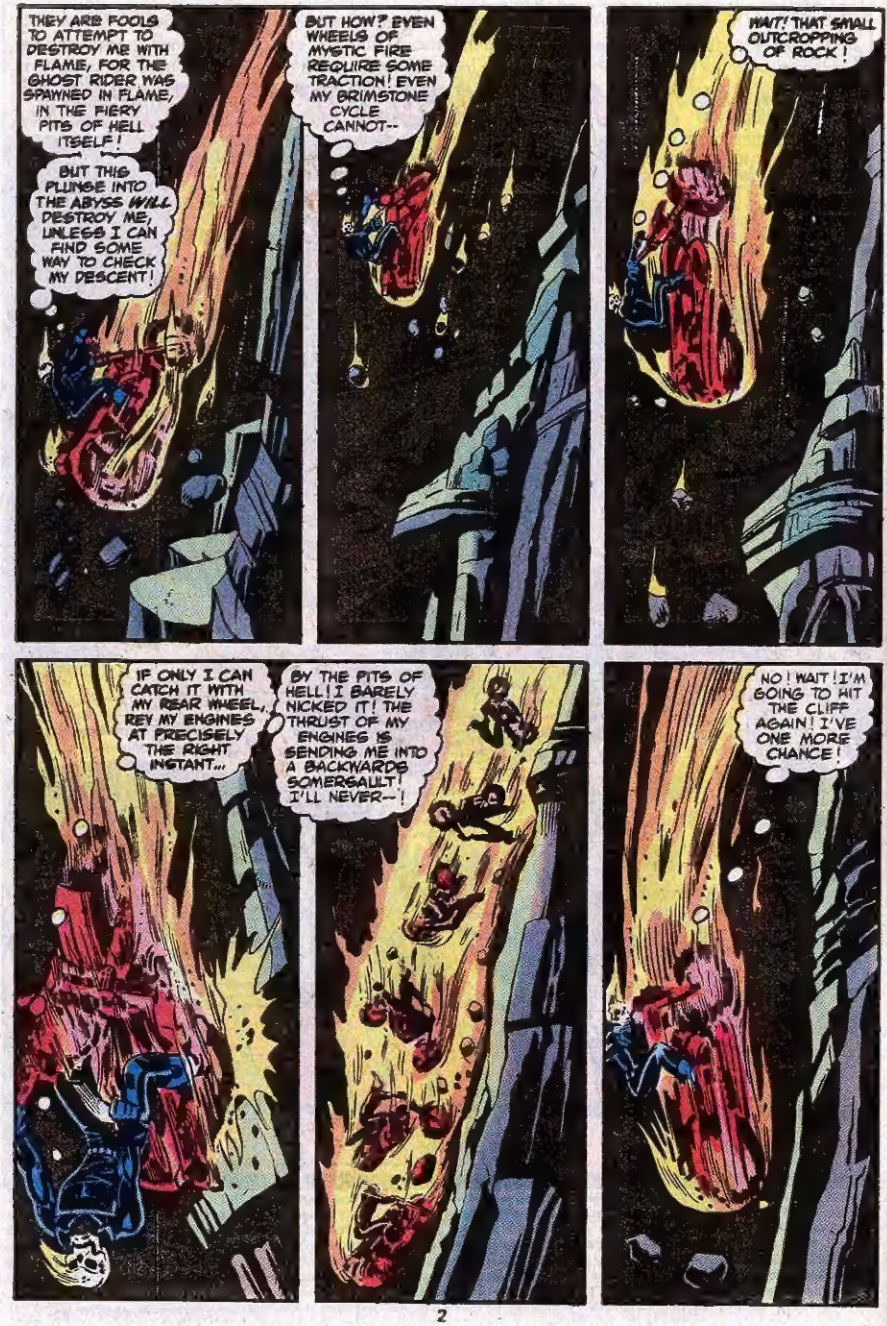
THEY ARE FOOLS TO ATTEMPT TO DESTROY ME WITH FLAME, FOR THE GHOST RIDER WAS SPAWNED IN FLAME, IN THE FIERY PITS OF HELL ITSELF!
BUT THIS PLUNGE INTO THE ABYSS WILL DESTROY ME, UNLESS I CAN FIND SOME WAY TO CHECK MY DESCENT!
BUT HOW? EVEN WHEELS OF MYSTIC FIRE REQUIRE SOME TRACTION! EVEN MY BRIMSTONE CYCLE CANNOT--
WAIT! THAT SMALL OUTCROPPING OF ROCK!
IF ONLY I CAN CATCH IT WITH MY REAR WHEEL, REV MY ENGINES AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT INSTANT...
BY THE PITS OF HELL! I BARELY NICKED IT! THE THRUST OF MY ENGINES IS SENDING ME INTO A BACKWARDS SOMERSAULT! I'LL NEVER--!
NO! WAIT! I'M GOING TO HIT THE CLIFF AGAIN! I'VE ONE MORE CHANCE!

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ONCE MORE, BRIMSTONE ENGINES CHURN IN SILENT AGONY AS SKELETAL HANDS REV THEM SUDDENLY TO FULL POWER. AND THEN--
I MADE IT! MY REAR WHEEL STRIKING THE CLIFF WALL...GAVE ME JUST THE SPLIT-SECOND OF TRACTION I NEEDED!
NO MORTAL CYCLIST COULD HOPE TO POSSESS THE AWESOME SKILL AND AGILITY NEEDED TO MAKE THIS PERILOUS CLIMB.
NO MAN-MADE CYCLE COULD ROCKET UP THIS NEAR-PERPENDICULAR INCLINE AT A SPEED SO DIZZYING THAT BOTH BIKE AND RIDER SEEM TO BLUR INTO ONE CONTINUOUS STREAK OF MOTION!
ONLY ONE MOTORCYCLE IN THE UNIVERSE COULD PERFORM THIS MIND-STUNNING FEAT ...ONLY ONE CYCLIST IN CREATION WOULD EVEN DARE ATTEMPT IT--
--THE GHOST RIDER!
NOW, YERMIN, THE DEATH OF HARLEY BAGGS SHALL BE AVENGED!
NOW SHALL YOU FACE MY HELL-SPAWNED WRATH!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

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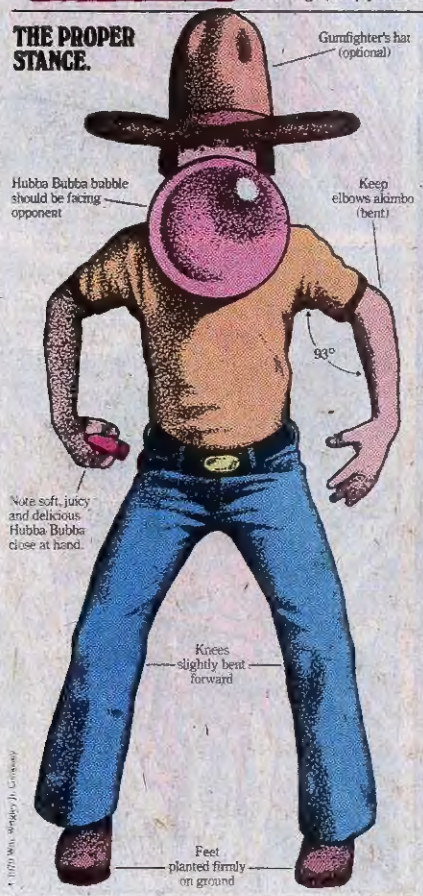
GUMFIGHTING DO'S AND DON'TS.

The first thing to do—pick the right chew: new Hubba Bubba.® The soft and juicy bubble gum with amazing no-stick bubbles.™ Then proceed with this simple yet effective gumfight drill: (1) Begin blowing bubble. Note Hubba Bubba's incredibly large bubble. (2) When the Hubba Bubba bubble breaks do not be alarmed. (3) Simply remove Hubba Bubba from your face. That's right, simply remove and replace in mouth. Return to step 1. Repeat drill ten times.

THE PROPER STANCE.


Gumfighter's hat (optional)
Hubba Bubba bubble should be facing opponent
Keep elbows akimbo (bent)
93°
Note soft, juicy and delicious Hubba Bubba close at hand.
Knees slightly bent forward
Feet planted firmly on ground

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This boy did. And now instead of wearing a smile, he's wearing a paper bag over the bubble gum stuck to his face. Definitely not new soft and juicy Hubba Bubba Bubble Gum. Does Hubba Bubba really work? Absolutely! Hubba Bubba is gumfighter tested and approved.

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WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO, BOBBIE? TH-THE DUDE AIN'T HUMAN!
DON'T WORRY! HE WON'T CATCH US!
THOMPSON'S GORGE IS DEAD AHEAD! SOON'S WE MAKE IT ACROSS THE BRIDGE, WE'LL CUT THE SUPPORTS AND LEAVE HIM STRANDED ON THE OTHER SIDE!
FASTER, BOBBIE! HE'S RIDIN' RIGHT UP OUR TAIL!
H-HE AIN'T USIN' THE BRIDGE! H-HE'S JUMPIN' THE GORGE!

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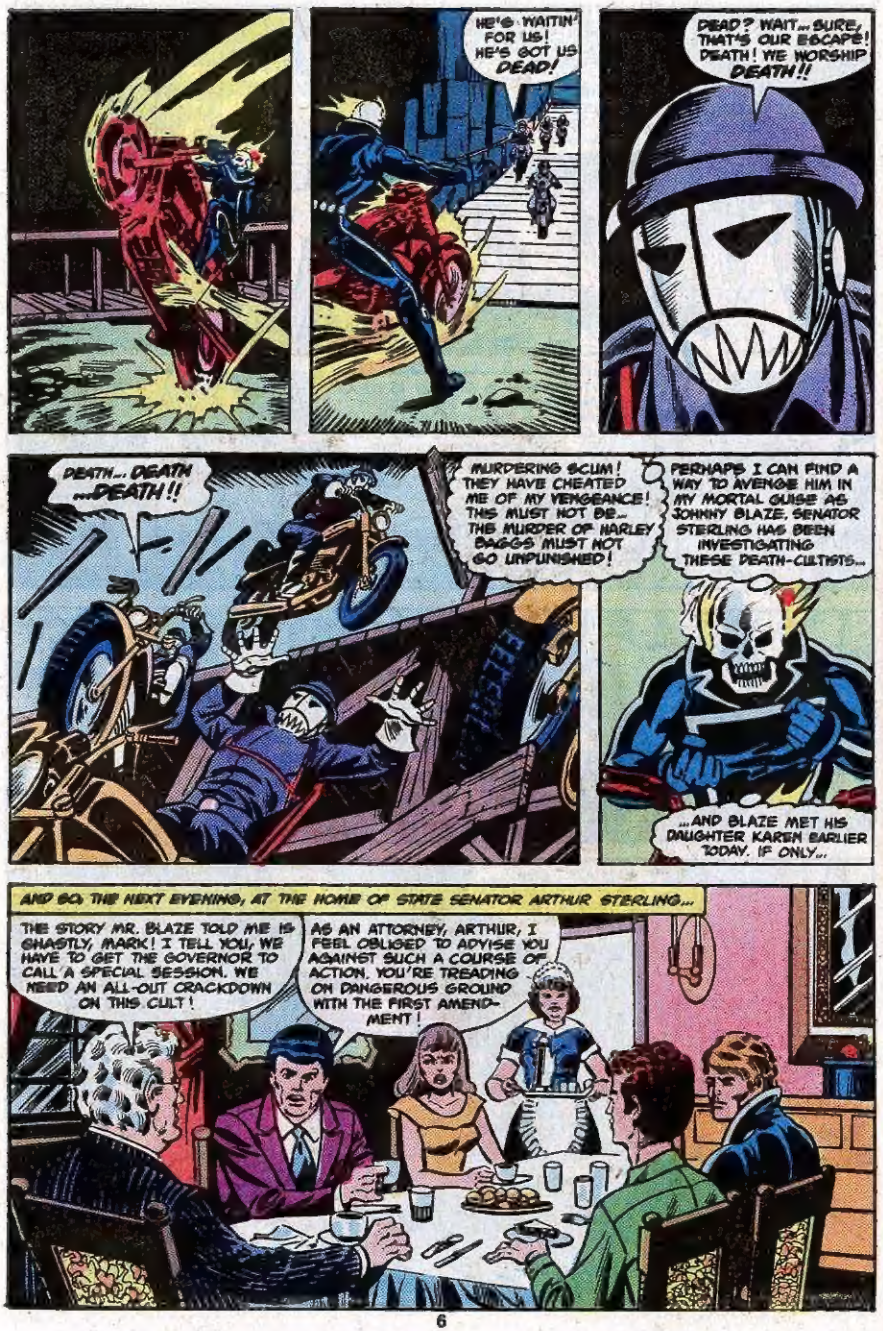
HE'S WAITIN' FOR US! HE'S GOT US DEAD!
DEAD? WAIT... SURE, THAT'S OUR ESCAPE! DEATH! WE WORSHIP DEATH!!
DEATH... DEATH ...DEATH!!
MURDERING SCUM! THEY HAVE CHEATED ME OF MY VENGEANCE! THIS MUST NOT BE... THE MURDER OF HARLEY BAGGS MUST NOT GO UNPUNISHED!
PERHAPS I CAN FIND A WAY TO AVENGE HIM IN MY MORTAL GUISE AS JOHNNY BLAZE. SENATOR STERLING HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING THESE DEATH-CULTISTS...
...AND BLAZE MET HIS DAUGHTER KAREN EARLIER TODAY. IF ONLY...
AND SO, THE NEXT EVENING, AT THE HOME OF STATE SENATOR ARTHUR STERLING...
THE STORY MR. BLAZE TOLD ME IS GHASTLY, MARK! I TELL YOU, WE HAVE TO GET THE GOVERNOR TO CALL A SPECIAL SESSION. WE NEED AN ALL-OUT CRACKDOWN ON THIS CULT!
AS AN ATTORNEY, ARTHUR, I FEEL OBLIGED TO ADVISE YOU AGAINST SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION. YOU'RE TREADING ON DANGEROUS GROUND WITH THE FIRST AMENDMENT!

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YOU CAN'T JUST GO AROUND INTERFERING WITH PEOPLE'S FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN THIS COUNTRY!
FREEDOM OF RELIGION? MARK CRANE, HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY CALL WHAT THOSE CULTISTS ARE DOING A...A RELIGION?!
WHY, THEY TRIED TO KILL ME! IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR--
PLEASE, KAREN, SPARE ME A RETELLING OF YOUR FANTASY ABOUT THE SKULL-HEADED MOTORCYCLIST YOU SAY RESCUED YOU FROM A FALL OFF A CLIFF!*
*LAST ISSUE--R.
HOW ABOUT YOU, BILLY? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS CULT BUSINESS?
UH, GEE, I DUNNO, MR. CRANE. I GUESS IF PEOPLE WANT TO JOIN SOME KINDA GROUP THAT'S OKAY BY ME!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! BILLY, HOW CAN YOU--?
AW, C'MON, SIS! LEAVE ME ALONE, WILLYA? YOU'RE ALWAYS...
LOOK! OVER THERE, AT THE WINDOW!
AND AS ALL EYES DART TO THE DINING ROOM WINDOW, THE TINDER-DRY SHRUBBERY OUTSIDE SUDDENLY ERUPTS INTO FLAME!
DEATH! WE WORSHIP DEATH!
I-IT'S THOSE DEATH CYCLISTS! THEY'VE SET FIRE TO THE HOUSE!
QUICK, MARIE --GET SOME BLANKETS!
YES, MR. STERLING!
JOHNNY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
AFTER THEM! YOU STAY HERE AND HELP PUT OUT THE FIRE!

CONTINUED AFTER 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

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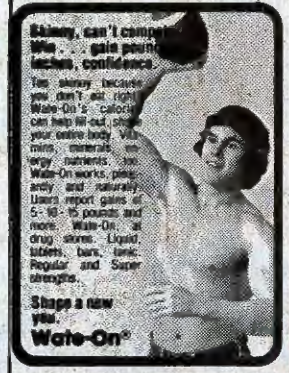
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BUT ONCE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE SAFELY OUT OF GOST UP HE TRANSFORMS BACK TO HUMAN JOHNNY BLAZE WILL AND HIS MORTALITY TO ASSUME THE MOST FEARED AVENGER OF THE NIGHT HAS BEEN BORN
AND WITH MOMENTS
THE EVIL ONES FLEE; AND THEY HAVE A GOOD HEAD START
BUT NO BEING THAT HAS EVER TROD THE EARTH
--CAN LONG HOPE TO ELUDE THE VENGEFUL WRATH OF ... THE GHOST RIDER !
SOON.
THE LEADER SHOULD BE PLAGUED WITH LO RIDER
OH MY GOD! LOOK!

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WHO COULD POSSIBLY DESCRIBE THE TERROR THAT GRIPS THESE MEN AS THE SATANIC AVENGER ROARS INTO THEIR MIDST IN A BLAZE OF HELLFIRE FUSING THEIR TIRES TO THE GROUND WITH BLASTS OF MYSTIC FLAME?
M-MY WHEELS! TH-THEY WON'T BUDGE!
M-MINE NEITHER!
NOT TO WORRY, YOU GUYS!
'CAUSE I'M GONNA SIZZLE THIS JASPER WITH--
YOUR PUNY WEAPON WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING AGAINST ME, VERMIN!
AND BEFORE THE DEATH CYCLIST CAN DRAW ANOTHER BREATH, THE GHOST RIDER LITERALLY MELTS HIS BIKE OUT FROM UNDER HIM!
OHHH
YOUR LEADER, SCUM! TELL ME THE NAME OF YOUR LEADER!
NO! NEVER! I--
TH-THAT FIRE ..COMIN' OUTTA YOUR HANDS! IT'S COLD-- LIKE IT'S BURNIN' UP MY SOUL!
P-PLEASE--DON'T HURT US ANYMORE! WE'LL TELL YA ANYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW!
Y-YEAH! LIKE THAT FIRE AT STERLING'S? REASON WE GET THAT..

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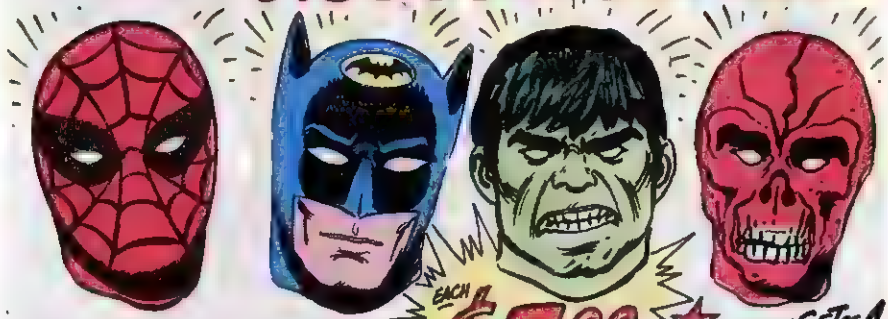
ALL-NEW! SUPER HEROES RUBBER MASKS



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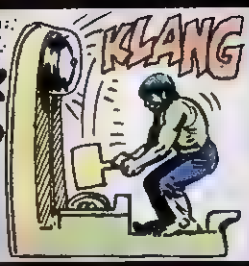

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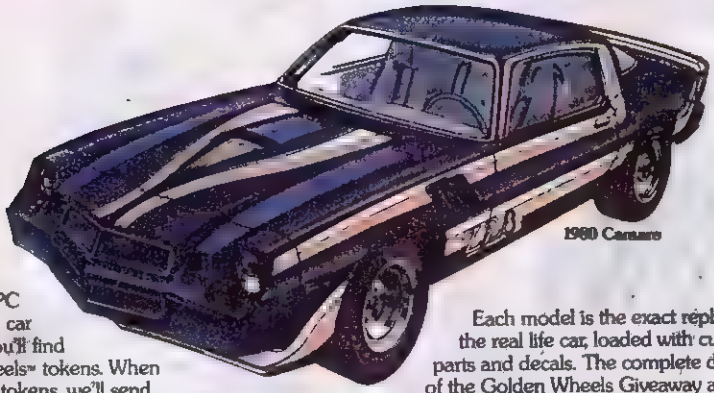

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A SHORT WHILE LATER...
I'M GLAD THE FIRE DID SO LITTLE DAMAGE. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THEY HOPED TO GAIN BY
LOOK, IT'S JOHNNY! AND HE'S CAPTURED THE CYCLISTS WHO SET THE FIRE!
WHAT?! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HOW COULD HE--?
WELL, NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW. IF HE'S CAPTURED THEM, THEY MAY HAVE SPILLED THE BEANS.
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
UH, BILLY.. COME UPSTAIRS WITH ME A MINUTE, WILL YOU, SON?
OH SURE MR CRANE!
MOMENTS LATER, IN BILLY'S ROOM...
THIS JOHNNY BLAZE IS A THREAT TO OUR GLORIOUS MOVEMENT, BILLY! I'M GOING TO SLIP AWAY, BUT YOU MUST STAY AND DEAL WITH BLAZE.
YES, MR CRANE
GOOD! FOLLOW ME IF WHEN YOU GET THE CHANCE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO
I KNOW.. WHAT I MUST.. DO!
...AS A MAN ENTRANCED, THE YOUTH PUTS ON THE GHASTLY ATTIRE

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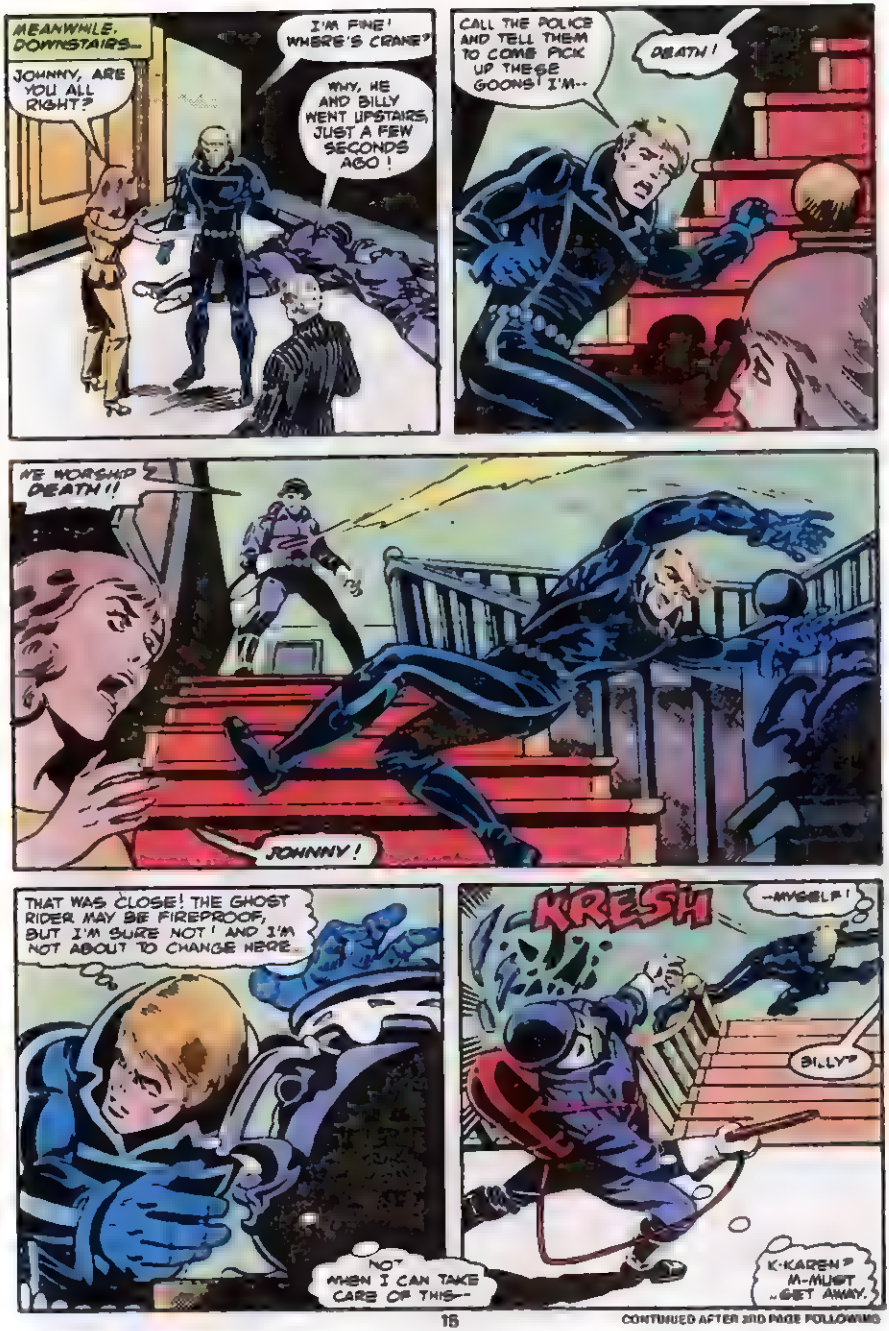
MEANWHILE, DOWNSTAIRS...
JOHNNY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE! WHERE'S CRANE?
WHY, HE AND BILLY WENT UPSTAIRS, JUST A FEW SECONDS AGO!
CALL THE POLICE AND TELL THEM TO COME PICK UP THESE GOONS! I'M--
DEATH!
WE WORSHIP DEATH!!
JOHNNY!
THAT WAS CLOSE! THE GHOST RIDER MAY BE FIREPROOF, BUT I'M SURE NOT! AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO CHANGE HERE...
NOT WHEN I CAN TAKE CARE OF THIS--
KRESH
--MYSELF!
BILLY?
K-KAREN? M-MUST GET AWAY.

CONTINUED AFTER 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

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WOWIE! ZOWIE!
CBS SATURDAY MORNINGS
LOOKING GOOD
8:00 EASTERN TIME
MIGHTY MOUSE
HECKLE AND JECKLE
HECKLE AND JECKLE GET THEIR KICKS! THEY'RE WACKY, WILD AND UP TO
MEW
MIGHTY MOUSE
MIGHTY MOUSE SAVES THE DAY ZAPPING FOES WHO STAND IN HIS WAY!
9:00
The Bugs Bunny Road Runner Show
BEEP BEEP
THAT "WIDDLE GWAY WABBIT" IS HAVING A BALL, WITH DAFFY, TWEETY AND LAUGHTER FOR ALL! THEN SPEEDY ROAD RUNNER ZOOMS FASTER THAN LIGHT, COYOTE CANT CATCH HIM, TRY AS HE MIGHT!

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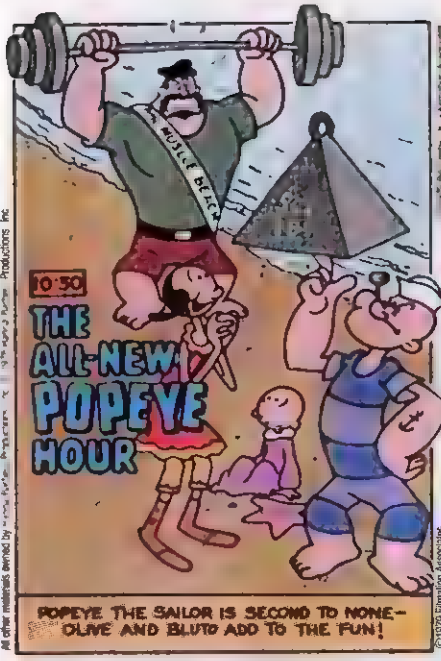
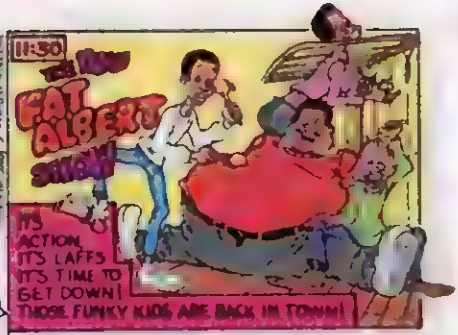
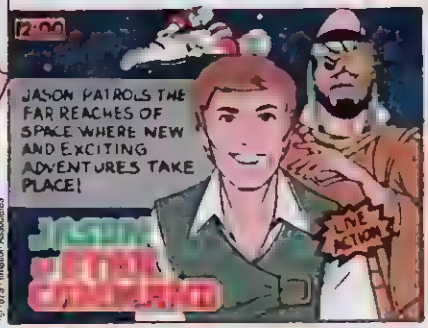
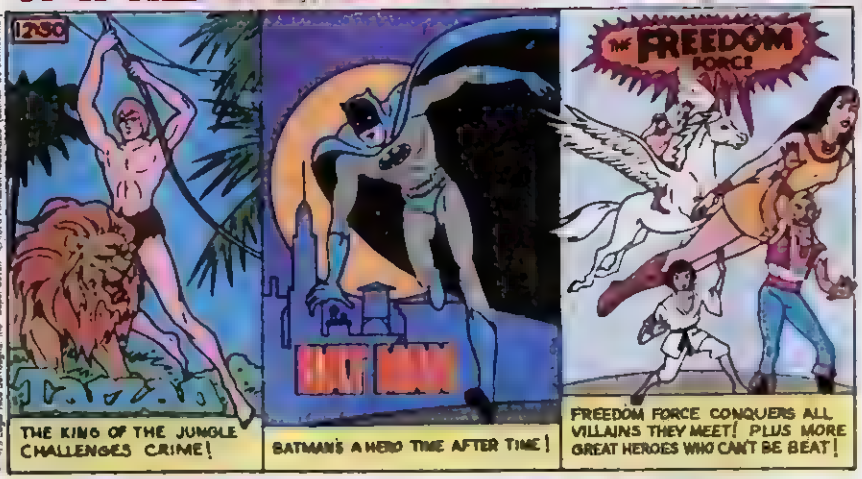
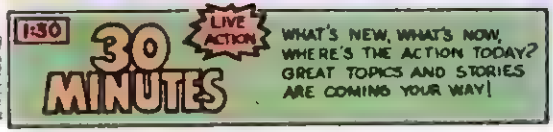






TARZAN AND THE SUPER SEVEN


12:30
THE KING OF THE JUNGLE CHALLENGES CRIME!
BATMAN'S A HERO TIME AFTER TIME!
THE FREEDOM FORCE
FREEDOM FORCE CONQUERS ALL VILLAINS THEY MEET! PLUS MORE GREAT HEROES WHO CAN'T BE BEAT!



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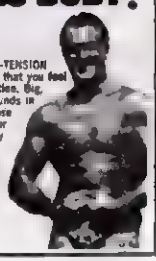

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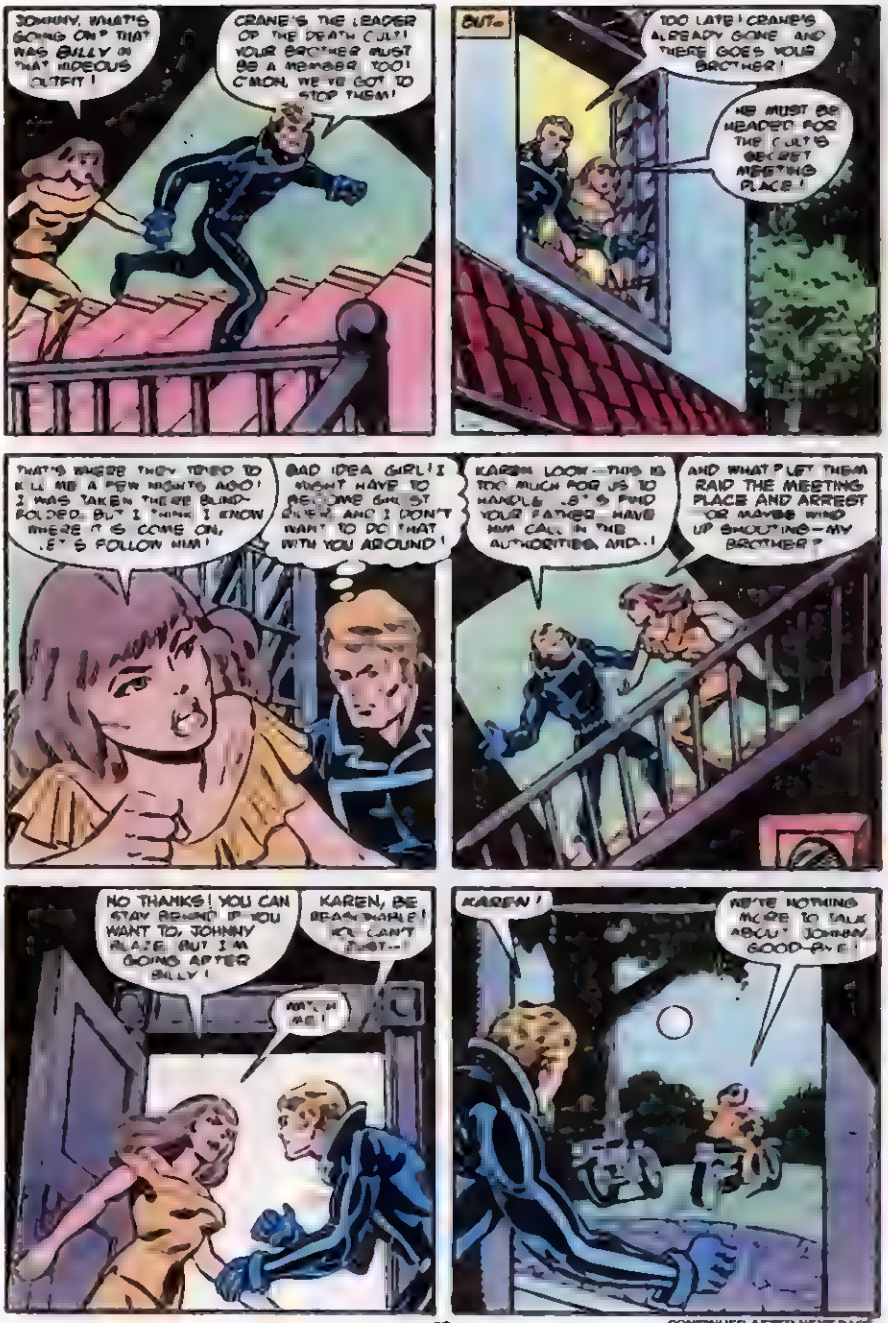
JOHNNY, WHAT'S GOING ON? THAT WAS BILLY IN THAT HIDEOUS OUTFIT!
CRANE'S THE LEADER OF THE DEATH CULT! YOUR BROTHER MUST BE A MEMBER TOO! C'MON, WE'VE GOT TO STOP THEM!
BUT--
TOO LATE! CRANE'S ALREADY GONE AND THERE GOES YOUR BROTHER!
HE MUST BE HEADED FOR THE CULT'S SECRET MEETING PLACE!
THAT'S WHERE THEY TRIED TO KILL ME A FEW NIGHTS AGO! I WAS TAKEN THERE BLINDFOLDED, BUT I THINK I KNOW WHERE IT IS. COME ON, LET'S FOLLOW HIM!
BAD IDEA, GIRL! I MIGHT HAVE TO BECOME GHOST RIDER, AND I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT WITH YOU AROUND!
KAREN, LOOK--THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR US TO HANDLE. LET'S FIND YOUR FATHER--HAVE HIM CALL IN THE AUTHORITIES AND--!
AND WHAT? LET THEM RAID THE MEETING PLACE AND ARREST--OR MAYBE MIND UP SHOOTING--MY BROTHER?
NO THANKS! YOU CAN STAY BEHIND IF YOU WANT TO, JOHNNY BLAZE, BUT I'M GOING AFTER BILLY!
KAREN, BE REASONABLE! YOU CAN'T JUST--!
WATCH ME!
KAREN!
WE'VE NOTHING MORE TO TALK ABOUT! JOHNNY GOOD-BYE!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

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PRESENTLY...
BETTER PUT OUT THAT BUTT AND COME ON, AL! THE MEMBERS ARE ALL ASSEMBLING FOR TONIGHT'S EMERGENCY MEETING!
BE RIGHT THERE, MIKE!
JUST AS SOON AS I TAKE A FEW MORE QUICK PUFFS!
WHAM!
I'D BETTER GET INTO THIS CHARACTER'S OUTFIT AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT! ANY SECOND NOW, SOMEBODY'S LIABLE TO SPOT ME!
TENSE MOMENTS LATER...
HEY, AL! COME ON, MAN! GET YOUR BIKE INTO FORMATION! THE MEETING'S ABOUT TO START!
UH, YEAH. RIGHT! I'M COMIN'!
AND SO...
NOW, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AS ALWAYS, WE WILL OPEN OUR GREAT GATHERING WITH OUR TRADITIONAL HOMAGE TO DEATH--
THE DEATH CEREMONY!
WHO WILL VOLUNTEER?
I VOLUNTEER, O GREAT LEADER!
AND I, GREAT LEADER!
THAT FIRST CYCLIST WHO VOLUNTEERED SOUNDED LIKE BILLY! BUT... THEY CAN'T BE VOLUNTEERING FOR--!

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THEN LET THE DEATH RIDE BEGIN!!
THE DEATH RIDE?! OH, NO--THAT'S THEIR SUICIDE RITUAL! PLAYING "CHICKEN" WITH BIKES AND FLAMETHROWERS!
BILLY NO!!
DESPERATELY, KAREN STERLING SNAPS OPEN THE THROTTLE, AND POPS THE CLUTCH, LAUNCHING HER CYCLE FORWARD, AND...
WRA-ACK
NOT MY BROTHER! I WON'T LET YOU HURT HIM!
SIS?!
THERE IS AN IMPOSTOR IN OUR MIDST! SEIZE HER!
SO! MISS STERLING! YOU HAVE CHEATED DEATH AT OUR HANDS BEFORE--I DARESAY YOU SHALL NOT BE SO FORTUNATE AGAIN!
THEN KAREN WAS TELLING THE TRUTH BEFORE!
NO! I WON'T LET--!
TRAITOR! YOU SHALL FOLLOW YOUR SISTER INTO OBLIVION!
WUDD

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BUT, AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
I DON'T LIKE HAVING TO CRASH IN ON ALL THESE CRAZIES AS JOHNNY BLAZE, BUT WITH KAREN INVOLVED, I DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE!
THE GHOST RIDER WOULD BE TOO INVOLVED WITH HIS VENGEANCE TRIP TO WORRY ABOUT KAREN!
GOOD LORD! THEY'RE ABOUT TO THROW HER OFF THAT CLIFF!
STAY AWAY FROM HER, YOU PACK OF LUNATICS, OR SO HELP ME, I'LL--
WHO DARES TO COMMIT SUCH GRIEVIOUS SACRILEGE UPON OUR SOLEMN PROCEEDINGS?! DEATH CYCLIST -OBLITERATE THE INFIDEL!
I HEAR AND OBEY!
A SHEET OF SEARING FLAME ROARS FROM THE FLAMETHROWER, ENGULFING THE FIGURE OF JOHNNY BLAZE IN A PILLAR OF FIRE!
NO ONE COULD SURVIVE SUCH AN ASSAULT...
...NO ONE BUT THE GHOST RIDER!

CONTINUED AFTER 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

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- Suzanne Somers
- Kiss Rock Group
- Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders

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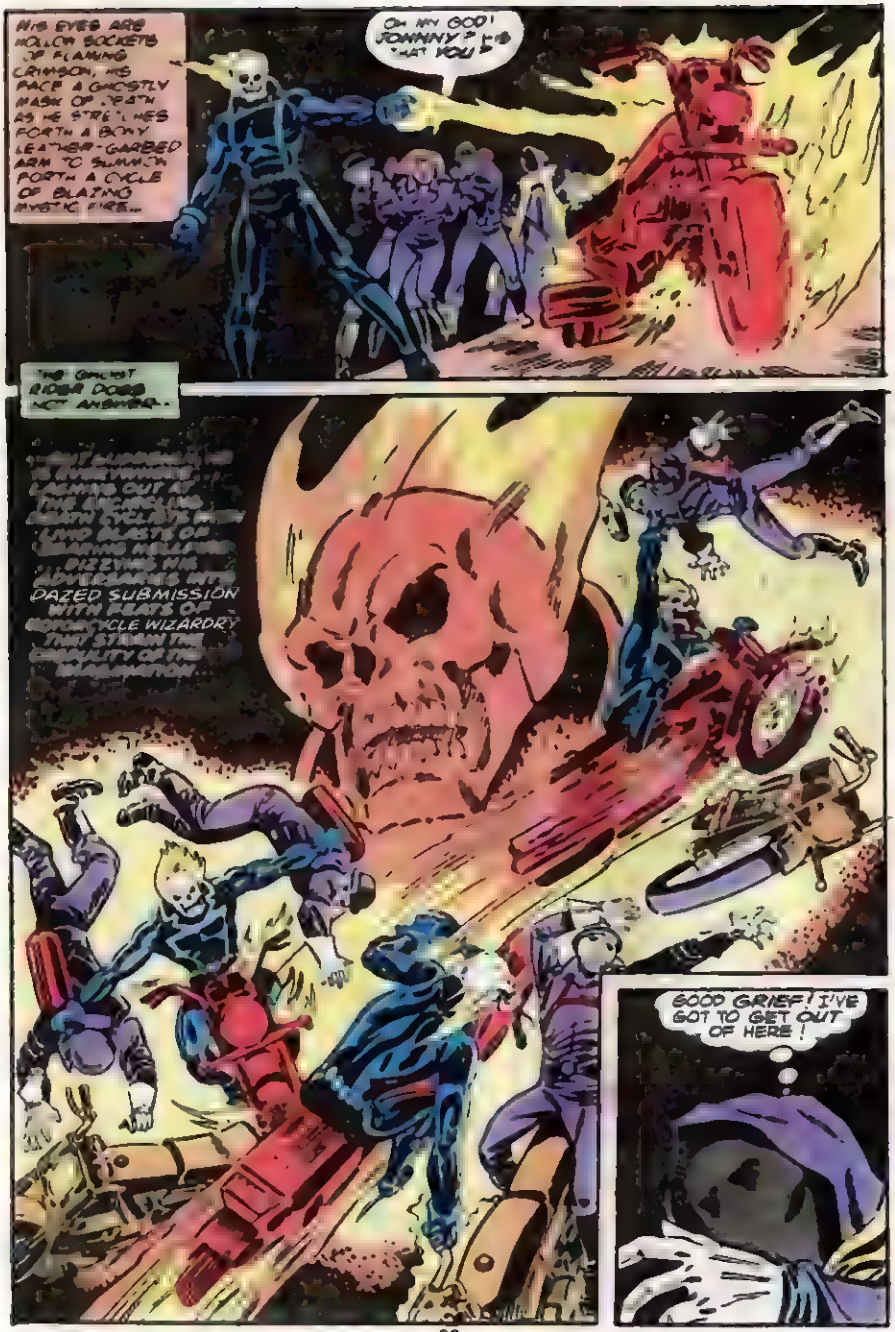
HIS EYES ARE HOLLOW SOCKETS OF FLAMING CRIMSON, HIS FACE A GHASTLY MASK OF DEATH AS HE STRETCHES FORTH A BONY LEATHER-GARBED ARM TO SUMMON FORTH A CYCLE OF BLAZING MYSTIC FIRE...
OH MY GOD! JOHNNY? IS THAT YOU?
THE GHOST RIDER DOES NOT ANSWER...
DAZED SUBMISSION WITH FEATS OF MOTORCYCLE WIZARDRY THAT STRAIN THE CREDULITY OF THE IMAGINATION...
GOOD GRIEF! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

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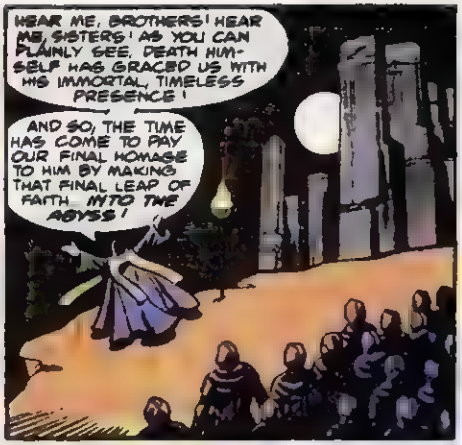
I'VE ALREADY STASHED AWAY ENOUGH "CONTRIBUTIONS" FROM THIS CULT RACKET TO ESCAPE TO SOUTH AMERICA AND LIVE LIKE A KING!
BUT FIRST, I NEED TO GET AWAY FROM THAT SPOOK! I NEED A DIVERSION...AND I KNOW JUST THE KIND!


HEAR ME, BROTHERS! HEAR ME, SISTERS! AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE, DEATH HIMSELF HAS GRACED US WITH HIS IMMORTAL, TIMELESS PRESENCE!
AND SO, THE TIME HAS COME TO PAY OUR FINAL HOMAGE TO HIM BY MAKING THAT FINAL LEAP OF FAITH...INTO THE ABYSS!

LIKE MINDLESS PHANTASMS IN SOME GHASTLY SEQUENCE OF DREAMS, THE THRONG OF DARK-ROBED WORSHIPPERS ADVANCES SLOWLY TOWARD THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF, THEIR VOICES RAISED TO THE HEAVENS IN A RHYTHMIC, PULSATING, ECSTATIC CHANT...
IT IS DEATH WE WORSHIP! WE WORSHIP DEATH!!

BUT WITH SKELETAL EYES ABLAZE IN CRIMSON HELLFIRE, THE GHOST RIDER LEAPS FROM HIS BIKE AND POSITIONS HIMSELF GRIMLY BETWEEN THE YAWNING ABYSS AND THE DEATH-BENT THRONG
BACK! I COMMAND YOU--BACK! DEATH SHALL NOT CLAIM YOU THIS NIGHT!
AND THE THRONG SLINKS BACK, AWAY FROM THE ABYSS, AWAY FROM DEATH, AS IT SENSES THAT IT IS IN THE THE PRESENCE OF AN UNEARTHLY BEING WHO WILL NOT BE DISOBEYED!

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BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hoo boy! Looks like I did it again! I've been so excited about our new, upcoming mag, EPIC, that I tried to clue you in to our progress as much as possible here in the Soapbox. And, judging by your enthusiastic mail, I could tell you eagerly shared the excitement. However, some letters of complaint have been trickling in, reminding me that I had pledged not to hawk any products in this column, and now I seem to be disregarding that promise! So, I'm telling you forthwith that the last thing I wanted to do was lay a huckster bit on you, honest! I considered the news about EPIC to be the most interesting, heaviest info I could give you; and I also figured you'd be hopping mad if our newest and most important publication were to go on sale without your being notified well in advance. Anyway, here's what I'm leading up to...

It's time for another maniacal Marvel poll! If you can spare a minute or two, I'd really appreciate your sending us a card or letter telling whether you'd like to continue reading notices of upcoming projects here in the Soapbox, or if you'd rather I wax eloquent about any of subject that can't possibly be considered as shilling for your shekels. As usual, the valiant voices of Marveldom Assembled will give us our orders, and we'll tell you what your cumulative verdict is as soon as Irving Forbush can tabulate the votes.

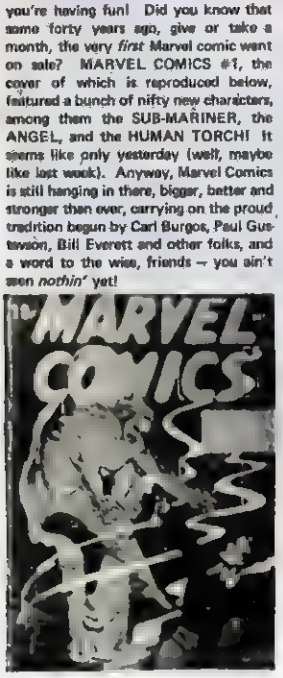
Of course, you know what sly little devils we are. Even if I don't mention E-C anymore (see? I didn't even write out the whole name!), you can bet that Jaunty Jimmy Shooter will toss it atcha in some other scintillatin' sections of these pandemonious pages. Anyway, you can relax for next ish, 'cause when we meet again I've got a whole new subject to hit you with. I've been out here in Hollywood, California for the past few weeks, and I'm really bustin' to clue you in on some of our upcoming movie and tv projects!

So, till later, keep cool and hang loose. Howie may be a duck, but never a goose!

Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! Wow! How time flies when you're having fun! Did you know that some forty years ago, give or take a month, the very *first* Marvel comic went on sale? MARVEL COMICS #1, the cover of which is reproduced below, featured a bunch of nifty new characters, among them the SUB-MARINER, the ANGEL, and the HUMAN TORCH! It seems like only yesterday (well, maybe like last week). Anyway, Marvel Comics is still hanging in there, bigger, better and stronger than ever, carrying on the proud tradition begun by Carl Burgos, Paul Gustavson, Bill Everett and other folks, and a word to the wise, friends — you ain't seen *nothin'* yet!



ITEM! Along those nostalgic lines, it just so happens that this month Simon & Schuster is releasing its latest collection of super hero adventures featuring the best of CAPTAIN AMERICA — including the very *first* comics story ever written by Stan Lee, back in 1943. (If Sly Stan is telling us the truth about his age these days, then he must have been only three years old back then!) Anyway, it's all classic stuff by the master himself and it's all in full glorious color, illustrated by Jack Kirby, Gene Colan, Jim Steranko and others. It's only $12.95 in hardback, and just $3.95 (a steal!) in paperback, for 128 big 7 x 10 pages of excitement, not to mention the snazzy cover painted by Dave Cockrum! Buzz on down to your favorite bookstore and *grab* one, friend — and tell the clerk that Nick Fury sent you. After about a hundred folks tell him that, he'll think *he's* the one who's crazy!

ITEM! *Secrets-behind-the-comics-department:* Did you know that writer-editor Archie Goodwin not only scripts our widely acclaimed STAR WARS comic, but actually provides ace artist Carmine Infantino with rough sketches of the action in every single panel? No wonder they call him artful Archie! Did you know that MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE co-scripters Mark Gruenwald and Ralph Macchio actually write alternating pages of the same story? We can't tell which pages are whose — can *you?* A no-prize to the fan who spots some stylistic clue that provides a sure-fire way to tell Gruenno from Macchienwald. Oops! Well, whatever. Did you know that in certain high professional circles Editor Roger Stern is regarded as the best in the business at *placing word balloons?* Now you do!

ITEM! Just the other day a couple of members of the hot new rock group *Suzan* dropped by the old Bullpen to hobnob with their buddy, Assistant Editor Jim Salicrup and to check out our operation. Overwhelmed (well, maybe just whelmed) by the sheer splendor of Mighty Marvel were Charles Leland, lead guitar and Mick Leland, drums. Their first album, entitled *Falling In Love Again*, was just recently released and it's bound to be a smash! Best of luck, troops!

ITEM! Occasionally, we've been told, we tend to brag just a bit when we're waxing eloquent over our latest works of wonder. Now of course, that's not true, but just to satisfy those few critics, this month we're going to tell you what's coming up with modesty and decorum: SPIDER-WOMAN #21 portrays a rather dramatic turnabout in the life of our heroine. A whole new cast of characters is introduced, all of whom we feel you'll find interesting. We humbly suspect that, perhaps, some people might feel that this issue will eventually become a collector's item. MASTER OF KUNG FU #83 contains an amiable tale. It is of some note that *Fu Manchu* returns therein. In addition, we feel that the art and writing are deftly done. MICRONAUTS #12 is reasonably nice, in that it adequately portrays a life-or-death battle between *Prince Acroyear* and his decidedly evil brother *Shaitan*. We would also like to recommend MACHINE MAN #12, GHOST RIDER #39, which is now monthly, by the way, and DR. STRANGE #38 which is the first issue by new scripter Chris Claremont. Space does not permit us to extoll the various virtues of these issues, however, we feel that they are worth their purchase price. All of the above, by the way, are on sale now! There! Satisfied? You don't know how *hard* that was, since we're really excited enough about the preceding issues to light up the sky! We can't wait till next month to get back to brag — oops! er, normal! See ya!

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HEY, WAIT
CATCH THESE, JUNIE!
ANOTHER TRICK, WEBHEAD??
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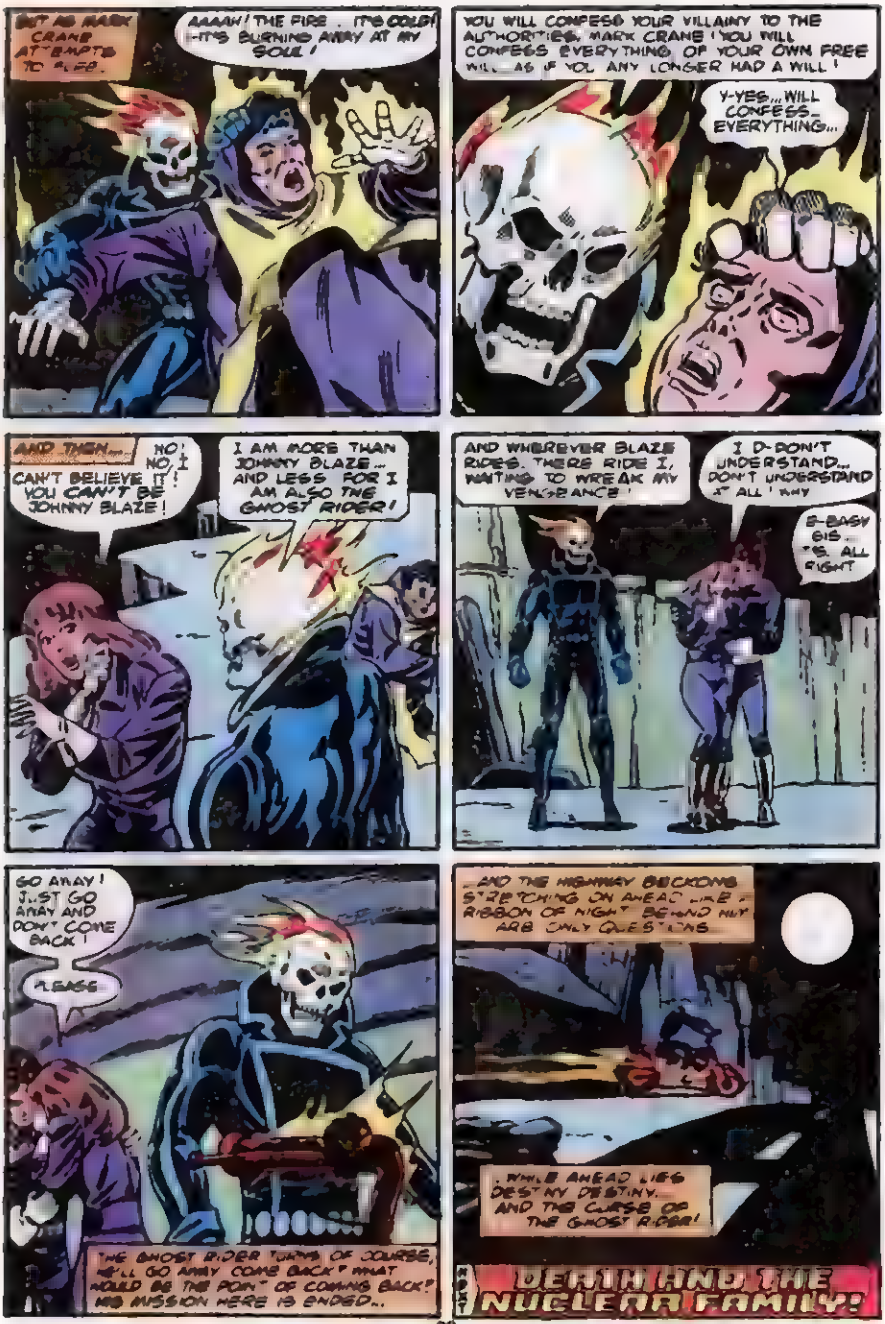
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Y-YES... WILL CONFESS... EVERYTHING...
AND THEN...
NO! NO, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! YOU CAN'T BE JOHNNY BLAZE!
I AM MORE THAN JOHNNY BLAZE... AND LESS FOR I AM ALSO THE GHOST RIDER!
AND WHEREVER BLAZE RIDES, THERE RIDE I, WAITING TO WREAK MY VENGEANCE!
I D-DON'T UNDERSTAND... DON'T UNDERSTAND IT ALL! WHY
S-SASH SIS... IS ALL RIGHT
GO AWAY! JUST GO AWAY AND DON'T COME BACK!
PLEASE...
THE GHOST RIDER TURNS OF COURSE, HE'LL GO AWAY COME BACK? WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT OF COMING BACK? HIS MISSION HERE IS ENDED...
...AND THE HIGHWAY BECKONS STRETCHING ON AHEAD LIKE A RIBBON OF NIGHT. BEHIND HIM ARE ONLY QUESTIONS...
...WHILE AHEAD LIES DESTINY DESTINY... AND THE CURSE OF THE GHOST RIDER!
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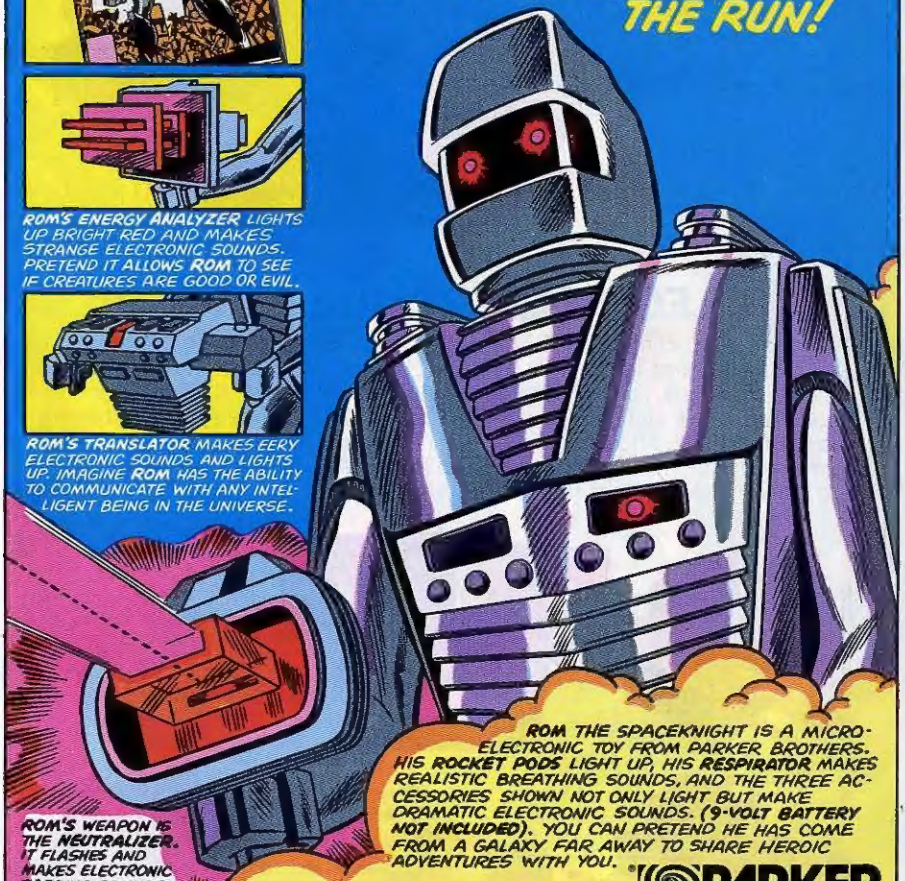

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